

Steering Committee Minutes
October 20, 2009 5:30 PM

Members Present: Elery Keene, Iver Lofving, Jim Wood, Doug Carick, Stu Silverstein, John Joseph, Sally Harwood, Ross Nason, Linda Woods

1. Concept paper EECBG proposal presented by John

John and the Energy Committee propose to do 100 free energy audits, assessments for solar hot water capacity, and provide a preliminary assessment of district energy use. The plan would develop a one-stop shopping approach by including contractors to assist with the repairs as well as banks to provide loans. (This will not be for LIHEAP houses.) The concept is to make this Residential (audits), Renewable (solar hot water), and Strategic (a combined plan) for Waterville & Winslow.

- 11 billion dollars are available; 1.2 billion is going to municipalities.
- Some “bigger” towns/cities have already received money.
- PUC is managing these projects and released an RFA. The use for the money is broad.
- The Energy Committee suggests applying for a regional grant which is worth up to \$170,000. This needs to go to the city/town governments. Oakland & Fairfield were not interested (as far as we know).
- More money could be available in further grants.
- By obtaining this grant to promote the work of Sustain Mid-Maine, we could be considered a model.
- Three point plan: provide energy audits for free to Waterville & Winslow residents; include a list of contractors to assist with repairs and banks to provide 3.9 % loans.
- partner with KVCAP to do these audits
- Suggested ways to choose recipients: neighborhood block-by-block (as suggested by Dale McCormick); a lottery; by need especially older homes & multi-family homes; first in-first out
- John said Bob Hussey thinks the grant could provide funds for an assessment of solar hot water. A group purchase of this could reduce the cost.
- Students from Colby, Thomas (for tax credits) & KVCC (solar connectors) could assist.
- Doug: KVCAP does the work for free, but recipient could make a donation to us to cover the savings.
- Stu: noted the difficulty of having a solar system work year round; wonders about gas-powered system like in Europe (only makes hot water when it is needed)
- Iver’s solar system works well every month. Even though December & January are weaker, but it still works.
- Elery thinks we should include the solar piece in case people are interested. If it works well, others will be interested.

- A discussion followed about the difficulty of solar power.
- Some money needs to be available for the district's feasibility study.
- This plan puts this area in a good place to be in the forefront of energy conservation.
- Summary: The plan is to reduce the energy consumption (specifically fossil fuel energy) in this area through incentives.
- Doug: What is the time line for this? Grant is due Nov. 18, and the project has to be completed in 2 years.
- Stu thinks having the energy audit is crucial to success. KVCAP is trying to establish a private energy audit program to generate reports for the home owners.
- John went to Maine Housing Conference in Augusta Monday.
- Maybe some money should be returned by the recipient when they make the repairs after the audit.
- Stu: The auditor should become the "Clerk of the Work" because the average homeowner may not understand and be taken advantage of.
- John: Quality control is essential, so this plan should include Maine Housing
- KVCAP charges \$500 for audits.
- Sally: wonders if home owners should contribute. The report asks for \$50. per home owner.
- Doug: criteria for number of homes per town. It is divided 50 (Waterville)-50 (Winslow).
- Maybe a combination of Block-by-Block and Lottery to determine eligibility.
- Doug: Lakes Smart Award in Belgrade for "greening" of property. Maybe: "This house has been completed and is now gold-labeled approved." A slogan like this gets the realtors involved.
- Stu: concerned there is no incentive for multi-family homes to improve (places like the Beehive on Western Ave.)
- Elery: entice ordinary (not necessarily low-income) people to serve as models
- Jim: focus on older homes and bring them up to standard; establish an age-threshold for potential homes
- Maine plans on 27,000 homes being weatherized in Maine.
- This is a pre-pilot project.
- Stu thinks there should be a pamphlet showing the value of audits. He also thinks there should be some money available to help with the repairs.
- Ross: Although this plan is solid, it is behind Unity. They did a series of workshops on weatherizing through the CAP agency & Home Energy Audits. A group of volunteers got training, purchased a "blower door" for the group, & does 60 audits a season. They do the audit & weatherization (for about \$60?). They used the State's kits and donated materials. They received grants and used volunteers. This is free for low to moderate income (referral or request basis); moderate income recipients pay for your own; higher income recipients are asked to pay for their own and one other. They ask all recipients to help weatherize at least one more home. FMI: Contact Tess

Woods (Unity Barn Raisers 984-9005?) Ron Desrosiers (Time & Tide 622-7847 ext. 4) Resource Conservation & Development.

- Linda will arrange a meeting between John & Ron.
- Iver: Get Americorps involved (Carol Dyer 474-9622)
- How to get volunteers involved? Include high-school students
- **Consensus is that this is a good idea and a solid project. The Steering Committee of the Sustain Mid-Maine Coalition is unanimous encouragement to proceed with this proposal.**
- John is heading up the prime objective. This is the one where we put our most energy. More is to come from the ideas that were presented tonight. Everyone needs to help in a variety of ways.

2. Reunion

- Ask all the people from Catalyst & interested people to gather
- Focus on the question: Where are we?
- Purpose: to get volunteers & publicity
- Date: looking at January; suggestion of the group: Saturday morning of MLK weekend 9 to 12
- Donation for food? Businesses to sponsor & be recognized
- Publicize it thoroughly
- Location: Maybe Hafford's?

3. Objective Review Summary

Each team leader has been asked to complete this form. If you need another copy, contact Linda

- due Dec. 15 to Linda
- Purpose: to have a sense of where we are to create graphics for Reunion; generate recruits; renew interest
- Good publicity
- Stu: important to get together to discuss what we've done & where we want to go

4. Rethink, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

- Two more Backyard Composting workshops to be held in October:
Wednesday, October 21 at 5 PM at Barrels; Saturday, October 24 at 11 AM at the Waterville Public Library

5. Education

- Next meeting: November 5 at 6:00 at Grand Central Cafe
- In the works: Community Educational Programs at Barrels to be held monthly
- Trying to get kids from local schools together
- Maybe there will be money from ECBG to train local kids to weatherize

The next Steering Committee Meeting will be **Tuesday, November 17 at 5:30 in the Conference Room.**

